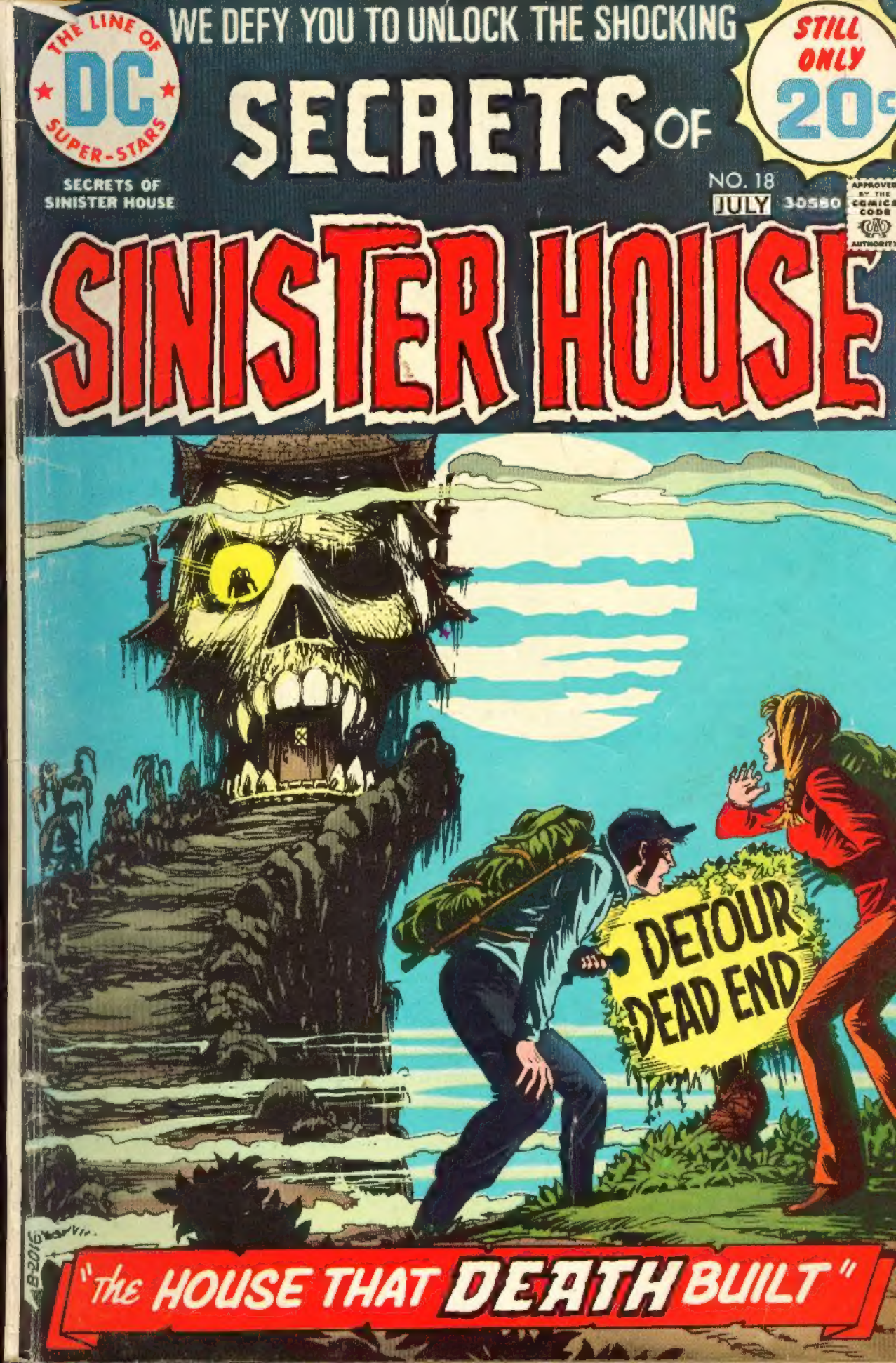
THE LINE OF
DC
SUPER-STARS
WE DEFY YOU TO UNLOCK THE SHOCKING
SECRETS OF
STILL ONLY 20¢
SECRETS OF SINISTER HOUSE
NO. 18
JULY
30580
APPROVED BY THE COMICS CODE AUTHORITY
SINISTER HOUSE
DETOUR DEAD END
"THE HOUSE THAT DEATH BUILT"

NOW, CAESAR! STOP QUARRELING WITH BONAPARTE!
BRRRR! OLD MAN FARRO TALKS TO THOSE PUPPETS AS IF THEY COULD HEAR HIM! IT'S ENOUGH TO GIVE YOU THE SHAKES!
DID YOU SEE THOSE FACES? I'D SWEAR, THEY WERE ALIVE! NO WONDER THEY CALL THIS DEMON STREET!
NO ONE KNEW HOW LONG OLD TITUS FARRO HAD LIVED IN THAT QUAINT CORNER OF THE CITY CALLED "THE VILLAGE." HE HAD NO FRIENDS EXCEPT THE EERIE MANIKINS HE CARVED. AND NO ONE DARED GUESS AT THE MACABRE SECRETS THAT LAY HIDDEN IN THE SHADOWED CORNERS OF...
THE STRANGE SHOP ON DEMON STREET
YES, THERE WERE TIMES WHEN HIS NEIGHBORS' BLOOD RAN COLD...
B-1864
LOOK! UP THERE! THAT HAND RAISING THE SHADE! IT'S ONE OF FARRO'S PUPPETS! IT--IT'S ALIVE!
I-I D-DON'T BELIEVE IT! OLD FARRO M-MUST BE P-PULLING THE STRINGS!
AND MORE THAN ONCE WHEN THE POSTMAN DROPPED THE MAIL OUTSIDE THE DOOR...
IT'S MOVING BY ITSELF... PICKING UP THE ENVELOPES! BUT WHAT'S MAKING IT WORK? I DON'T SEE ANY STRINGS!

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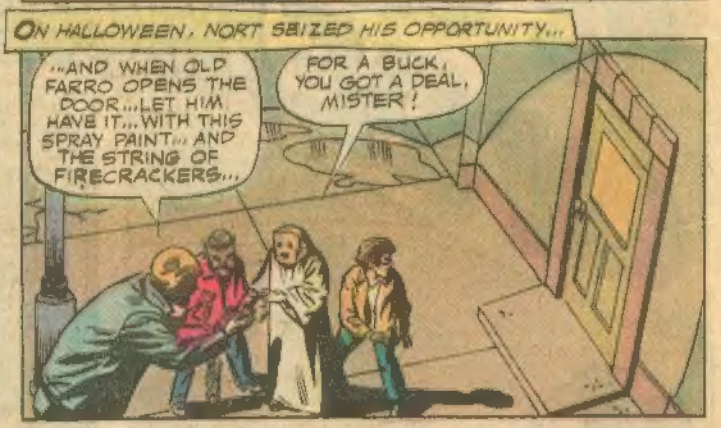
SOMETIMES, A TOURIST WOULD STOP BY...
OH... THIS ONE IS ADORABLE! I'LL GIVE YOU $50 FOR IT!
SELL YOU ONE OF MY CHILDREN? DO I LOOK LIKE SOME KIND OF MONSTER? KEEP YOUR MONEY, LADY!

THEN, ONE DAY, AS GREEDY EYES WATCHED...
HMMM! I COULD MAKE SOME BREAD MYSELF... SELLING A COUPLE OF THEM PUPPETS!
LIKE I SAID, NORT... IF HE NEVER SELLS THOSE WOODEN DOLLS, WHAT DOES HE DO FOR MONEY? HE MUST HAVE A MINT STASHED AWAY!

BUT WHEN NORT LASHER RAIDED OLD FARRO'S SHOP...
CLLATTTERRR!
CLLAAKKK!
EEEEYYOWWW!

THEY'RE ONLY WOOD HUNG UP ON STRINGS! HOW COULD THEY BITE ME?
THE OLD GUY MUST'VE PULLED SOME KIND OF TRICK!
I'LL PAY HIM OFF... BUT GOOD!


ON HALLOWEEN, NORT SEIZED HIS OPPORTUNITY...
...AND WHEN OLD FARRO OPENS THE DOOR...LET HIM HAVE IT...WITH THIS SPRAY PAINT... AND THE STRING OF FIRECRACKERS...
FOR A BUCK, YOU GOT A DEAL, MISTER!

TRICK OR TREAT...!
GET SET, YOU GUYS!
I'M LIGHTING THE AMMO!

AS THE DOOR SWUNG WIDE OPEN...
BRRAAKKRRAKAKKK!
WH-WHAA--???
PAINT
SWOOOSSSHHH!
S-SKELETONS!
YIIIIII!
THEY'RE ONLY PUPPETS! OLD FARRO MUST BE W-WORKING 'EM ON S-STRINGS!
MOMENTS LATER, THE SQUAD CARS STREAKED INTO THE TERRIFIED "VILLAGE."
AND THEN THEY WERE FLEEING IN MAD PANIC!
NO! THEY'RE FOR REAL...
AND THEY'RE AFTER US!
MOMMAAA!
LIVING SKELETONS, I TELL YOU! THEY SCARED OUR KIDS OUTTA THEIR WITS... AND THEN RAN INTO FARRO'S SHOP!
THE OLD ZANY COULDA GIVEN SOMEBODY A HEART ATTACK! HE OUGHTA BE HORSEWHIPPED!
3

LIVING SKELETONS! BAH! THEY'RE PLAYING US FOR SAPS!
DON'T BE TOO SURE! LOOK AT THOSE TRACKS... LEADING FROM THAT PUDDLE RIGHT TO FARRO'S DOOR!
BUT, OFFICER... I DON'T UNDERSTAND... MY CHILDREN WOULDN'T CHASE ANYONE... UNLESS I ASKED THEM TO!
OKAY, POP! MAYBE THEY LOOK LIKE REAL LITTLE PEOPLE TO YOU...
SOMEBODY OUGHTA SHIP THAT OLD COOT TO THE NUT FARM!
THE POOR KOOK... IN HIS FEEBLE OLD MIND, HE'S PLAYING GOD...
BUT FACE IT! THEY'RE JUST BUNDLES OF WOOD AND HARDWARE... MOVED BY STRINGS!
NO! DOESN'T ANYONE UNDERSTAND? THEY'RE MY CREATIONS... MY CHILDREN! I GAVE THEM LIFE... AND I CAN TAKE IT AWAY, TOO!
KIDS... CRAZY OLD MAN... SKELETONS! THE WHOLE NEIGHBORHOOD'S GOING BANANAS!
BREAK IT UP, EVERYBODY! CLEAR THE STREETS!
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT... BUT I'M GONNA SQUARE THINGS WITH THAT OLD PHONY... IF IT'S THE LAST THING I DO!
CONTINUED ON 3 52 PAGE FOLLOWING
4

DAYS LATER, NORT HAD DEVISED A SIMPLE PLAN THAT WOULD COMBINE REVENGE WITH PROFIT!
YEAH... I BEEN CHECKING ON HIM! FARRO WAS IN BIG-TIME VAUDEVILLE ONCE... HE SOCKED AWAY A SMALL FORTUNE... AND NOW HE'S LIVING OFF BANK INTEREST.
NATIONAL BANK
EVERY WEEK, HE TAKES OUT SOME MONEY FOR EXPENSES... LIKE WE JUST SAW!
SO WE MEET HIM NEAR THE ALLEY!
YEAH, IT'S DANGEROUS FOR A SENIOR CITIZEN TO WALK AROUND UNPROTECTED WITH ALL THAT DOUGH!
HERE'S THE OLD GOAT NOW!
WATCH YOUR LANGUAGE! YOU GOTTA SHOW RESPECT FOR OLD AGE!
C'MON, POP! LET ME SHOW YOU HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU!
I'LL GIVE YOU MY MONEY... TAKE MY WALLET!
THAT'S ONLY PART OF THE PACKAGE... I'VE BEEN WAITING TO GET YOU AWAY FROM YOUR SHOP...
...AND ALL THOSE CUTE PUPPETS OF YOURS.
AND THEN, WITH MERCILESS SAVAGERY...
NO!... NO!
ONCE OVER LIGHTLY, GUYS... THEN WE SPLIT!
THUDD!
WHAAPPP!
WHUKK!

AND AS FARRO SANK BENEATH THEIR PITILESS ATTACK...
WHAT'S THE OLD CREEP BABBLIN' ABOUT? WE MUSTA SOFTENED HIS BRAIN!
CHILDREN...MY CHILDREN...
COME TO ME! HELP ME!

SUDDENLY, IN THE SILENCE OF THE SECLUDED ALLEY...
KLAKKK!
CLATTER! CLLAAKKKK!
CLACKK!
WH-WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
OMIGOD!

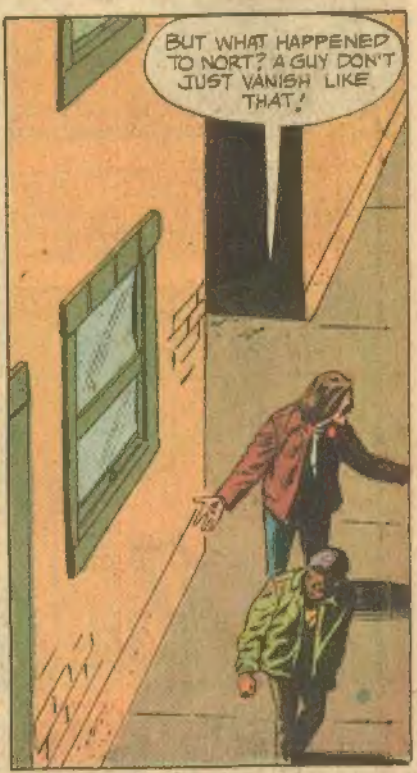
AND THEN THEY SAW THEM...THE TOWERING HULKS OF WOOD, WIRE AND STEEL...ANSWERING THEIR CREATOR'S PLEAS...
MY CHILDREN... COME...HELP ME...
GIANT PUPPETS...AS BIG AS WE ARE... WE GOTTA BE DREAMING THIS! IT CAN'T BE FOR REAL!

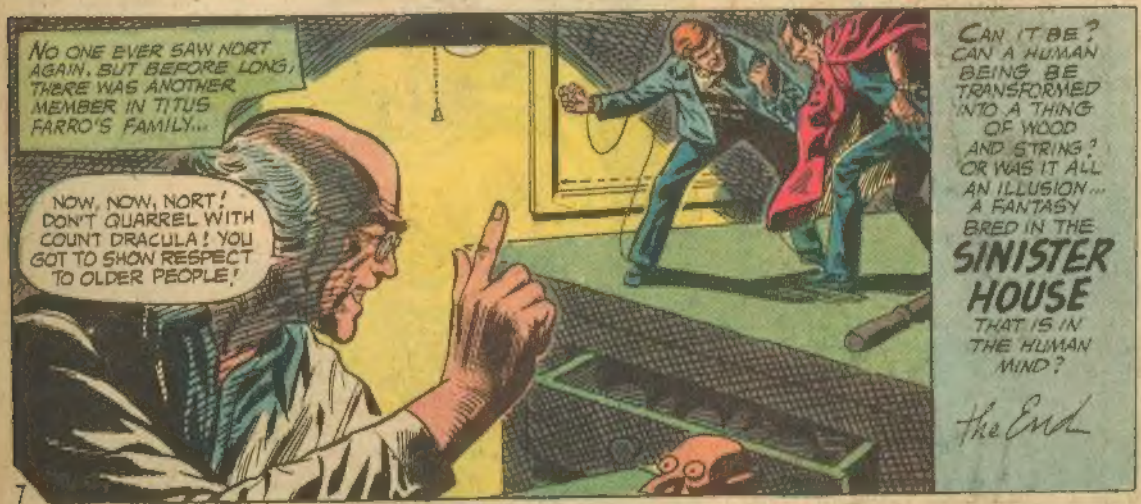
AND THEN THE NIGHTMARE CREATURES STRUCK...WITH KNOTTY WOODEN FISTS...AND LIMBS LIKE OAKEN BEAMS...
KLUPPPP! RARRRGGG!
THUD!
URRRGGG!

AND WHEN THE BATTLE ENDED...
...CAN'T BELIEVE... IT COULDN'T HAPPEN!
BUT I'M SEEIN' IT WITH MY OWN EYES!
CARRYING HIM... LIKE HE WAS THEIR FATHER!

WE'RE LUCKY TO BE ALIVE!
BUT WHERE'S NORT? I DON'T SEE HIM ANYWHERE! MAYBE HE SPLIT!

NO... I SEEN ONE OF THEM PUPPETS MASH HIM UP AGAINST A WALL...
MAYBE WE OUGHTA TELL THE COPS!
TELL THEM WE TRIED TO MUG SOMEONE, AND GOT CLOBBERED BY GIANT PUPPETS? THEY'D TOSS US IN THE LOONEY BIN!


BUT WHAT HAPPENED TO NORT? A GUY DON'T JUST VANISH LIKE THAT!


NO ONE EVER SAW NORT AGAIN. BUT BEFORE LONG, THERE WAS ANOTHER MEMBER IN TITUS FARRO'S FAMILY...
NOW, NOW, NORT! DON'T QUARREL WITH COUNT DRACULA! YOU GOT TO SHOW RESPECT TO OLDER PEOPLE!
CAN IT BE? CAN A HUMAN BEING BE TRANSFORMED INTO A THING OF WOOD AND STRING? OR WAS IT ALL AN ILLUSION... A FANTASY BRED IN THE SINISTER HOUSE THAT IS IN THE HUMAN MIND?
The End

MAD to ORDER
COME IN, GENTLEMEN, COME IN!
WHAT IS IT YOU WANT?
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WHY, YOU'RE THE TAILORS! I REALLY WASN'T EXPECTING YOU, BUT WE'RE BOTH BUSY, SO LET'S GET ON WITH THE FITTING!
I DON'T LIKE THE COLOR! WHERE ARE THE POCKETS?... OH, IT'S THE LATEST THING, YOU SAY? VERY FASHIONABLE HERE... YOU'RE JUST TRYING IT ON FOR SIZE...?
THIS ISN'T MY SIZE! IT'S TIGHT--TOO TIGHT! GOOD HEAVENS, MAN, ARE YOU DEAF?...
THOSE STRAPS AND BUCKLES, THEY'RE MAKING IT MUCH TOO TIGHT!
HOW DARE YOU! LET GO OF MY OTHER ARM! I DON'T LIKE IT! I DON'T WANT IT! I'LL NEVER, NEVER BUY ANOTHER THING FROM YOU!
IT'S SO TIGHT, I CAN'T EVEN MOVE MY ARMS... TO PAY YOU... WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
THE END.

The Baby Who Had But... "ONE YEAR TO DIE"...

LIKE A TEAR-JERKER, EH? WELL, BEFORE YOU FILE THIS LITTLE SHOCKER IN THE DEEP RECESSES OF YOUR MIND, YOUR NERVES WILL BE TAUT AND YOUR HEART BEATING LIKE A BONGO DRUM...

ART BY: ANGEL B. LUNA
STORY BY: D.W. HOLTZ

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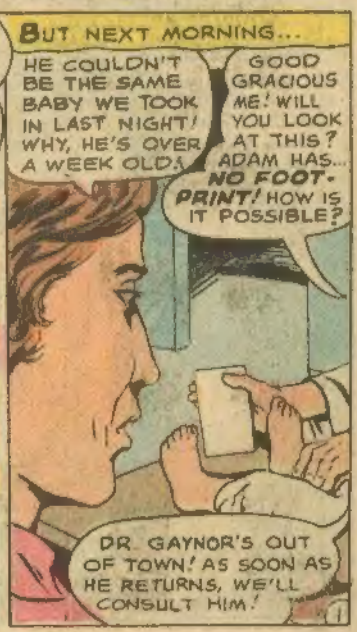
B-2036

SUCH A YOUNG ONE!
OUR FIRST ARRIVAL OF THE YEAR! LET'S NAME HIM ADAM! PUT HIM IN A CRIB! WE'LL GIVE ADAM THE USUAL CHECK-UP TOMORROW!

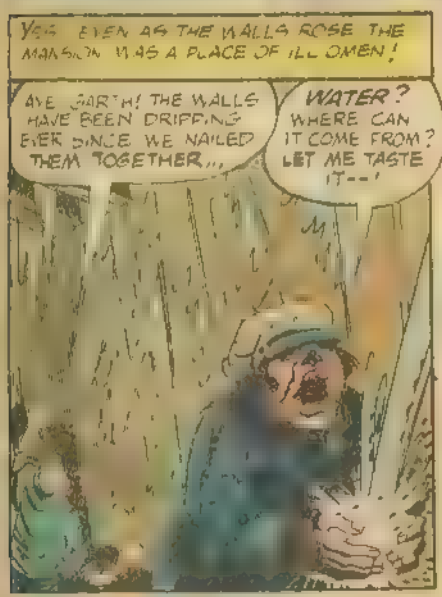

BUT NEXT MORNING...
HE COULDN'T BE THE SAME BABY WE TOOK IN LAST NIGHT! WHY, HE'S OVER A WEEK OLD!
GOOD GRACIOUS ME! WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS? ADAM HAS... NO FOOT-PRINT! HOW IS IT POSSIBLE?
DR. GAYNOR'S OUT OF TOWN! AS SOON AS HE RETURNS, WE'LL CONSULT HIM!

ONE WEEK LATER..
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS-- THIS "BABY" YOU TOOK IN IS OVER TWO YEARS OLD!
WE HAVEN'T LOST OUR SENSES, DOCTOR! HE'S THE SAME CHILD! AND HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN HIS LACK OF FOOTPRINTS?
YOU'VE GOT ME! I NEVER HEARD OF SUCH A THING-- UNLESS HE'S SOME SORT OF ALIEN BEING!
I'D LIKE TO KEEP HIM UNDER OBSERVATION AT MY CLINIC--
BY ALL MEANS, DOCTOR!
THUS BEGAN A BEWILDERING, NIGHTMARISH PHENOMENON FOR DR. GAYNOR
HIS HEARTBEAT'S NORMAL FOR THAT OF A 10-YEAR-OLD!
BUT HE'S JUST OVER ONE MONTH OLD!
MOST ASTOUNDING-- WHY, THIS YOUNG MAN'S 20 IF HE'S A DAY!
SMILE, ADAM! REMEMBER, TODAY'S YOUR 30TH BIRTHDAY! DR GAYNOR IS GOING TO RELEASE THE NEWS ABOUT YOU TO THE PRESS!
MY SIDESHOW WILL PAY YOU 100 GRAND A YEAR!
SMILE, ADAM! YOU'RE ON TV!
YEAH, AS A FREAK! GET OUT, ALL OF YOU, BEFORE I GO MAD!
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
YOU'VE DONE EVERYTHING BUT DISSECT ME FOR A LONG TIME! AND YOU STILL DON'T KNOW WHO I AM... OR WHAT!
WELL, I'VE HAD IT! MAYBE I CAN FIND THE ANSWERS MYSELF!
2

EVERYBODY'S HEARD OF ME BY NOW... I CAN'T STAND THEIR CURIOUS GLANCES... BUT I MUST EAT... AND SHELTER 'AH... THAT FARM--'
COME IN, COME IN, STRANGER! I NEED A HAND TO TEND MY FARM. DID YOU WANT THE JOB?
HE'S--BLIND. UNABLE TO STARE AT ME AS I RAPIDLY AGE. TO HIM, I WON'T BE A FREAK, JUST A NORMAL MAN!
I'D BE GLAD TO WORK HERE, SIR!
THE MONTHS SLIPPED BY, AND AS ADAM AGED, AND AGED, AND AGED, ONE SINGLE THOUGHT HAMMERED AT HIS BRAIN.
WHY IS THIS HAPPENING? WHO.. WHAT... AM I?
IT WASN'T UNTIL LATER THAT OLD ADAM WAS ABOUT TO GRASP THE ASTONISHING ANSWER
I... I'M SO OLD... I CAN HARDLY STAND ON MY.. FEEBLE LEGS. FEEL AS IF I'M GOING... TO DIE...
NOW I KNOW WHO I AM. WHY I AGED! I'M .FATHER TIME! I WAS BORN THAT DAY NEARLY A YEAR AGO WHEN OLD FATHER TIME BROUGHT ME TO THAT ORPHANAGE! MY LIFE IS EBBING, BUT THERE'S ONE THING I MUST DO!
ORPHANAGE
IT'S YOUR TURN TO TAKE OVER, LITTLE ONE... AND MAY YOU BRING TO ALL A HAPPY NEW YEAR...
BONG! BONG! BONG!
12
6
IT'S MIDNIGHT! HAPPY NEW YEAR!
THE END
3

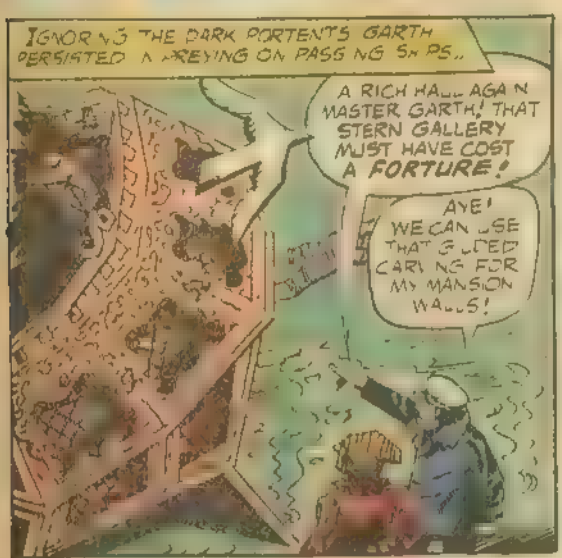
THE BEACH WAS ALIVE WITH EVIL! IN ITS SANDS LAY A HUNDRED VICTIMS OF A SATANIC SCHEMER NAMED ORIN GARTH, MASTER OF...
THE HOUSE THAT DEATH BUILT
HEAVEN HELP US--ANOTHER WRECK!
THE SHIP'S CREW MUST HAVE THOUGHT THAT FIERY BEACON MARKED A PASSAGE THROUGH THIS ISLAND!
IT WAS THAT CURSED MURDERER, GARTH, WHO SET THAT FALSE BEACON! HE'S WRECKED A DOZEN SHIPS ON THESE SHORES!
AT DAWN, ORIN GARTH AND HIS SCAVENGERS WERE LOOTING THE WRECKAGE AS USUAL...
MUST BE HUNDREDS OF BALES OF SILKS AND SPICES ON THE BEACH, GARTH!
GET 'EM TO THE WAREHOUSE!
LEAVE THE BODIES FOR THE NEXT TIDE TO CARRY OUT!
AND AS OTHER ISLANDERS RAGED IN WRATH---
YOU LURED THAT VESSEL ONTO THESE SHORES, GARTH! AND NOW YOU PICK HER BONES LIKE THE VULTURE YOU ARE!
CALL ME ALL THE NAMES YOU LIKE--YOU CAN'T PROVE A THING!
IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE JEALOUS! WHILE YOU'RE STILL WORKING FOR PENNIES MY HEAD WILL LIE ON A SILKEN PILLOW!
NATIONAL PERIODICALS
ART BY J. GRANDENETTI
STORY BY L. DORFMAN
S-1672

IN HIS GREED, ORIN GARTH EVEN SALVAGED THE BONES OF THE VESSELS HE SANK
THE MURDERING DEVIL! HE'S USING THE TIMBERS OF THE SUNKEN SHIPS TO BUILD HIMSELF A MANSION!
IT'S AN ABOMINATION I TELL YOU... THE HOUSE THAT DEATH BUILT!


YES, EVEN AS THE WALLS ROSE THE MANSION WAS A PLACE OF ILL OMEN!
AYE GARTH! THE WALLS HAVE BEEN DRIPPING EVER SINCE WE NAILED THEM TOGETHER...
WATER? WHERE CAN IT COME FROM? LET ME TASTE IT--!

PTTTT
SALT WATER!

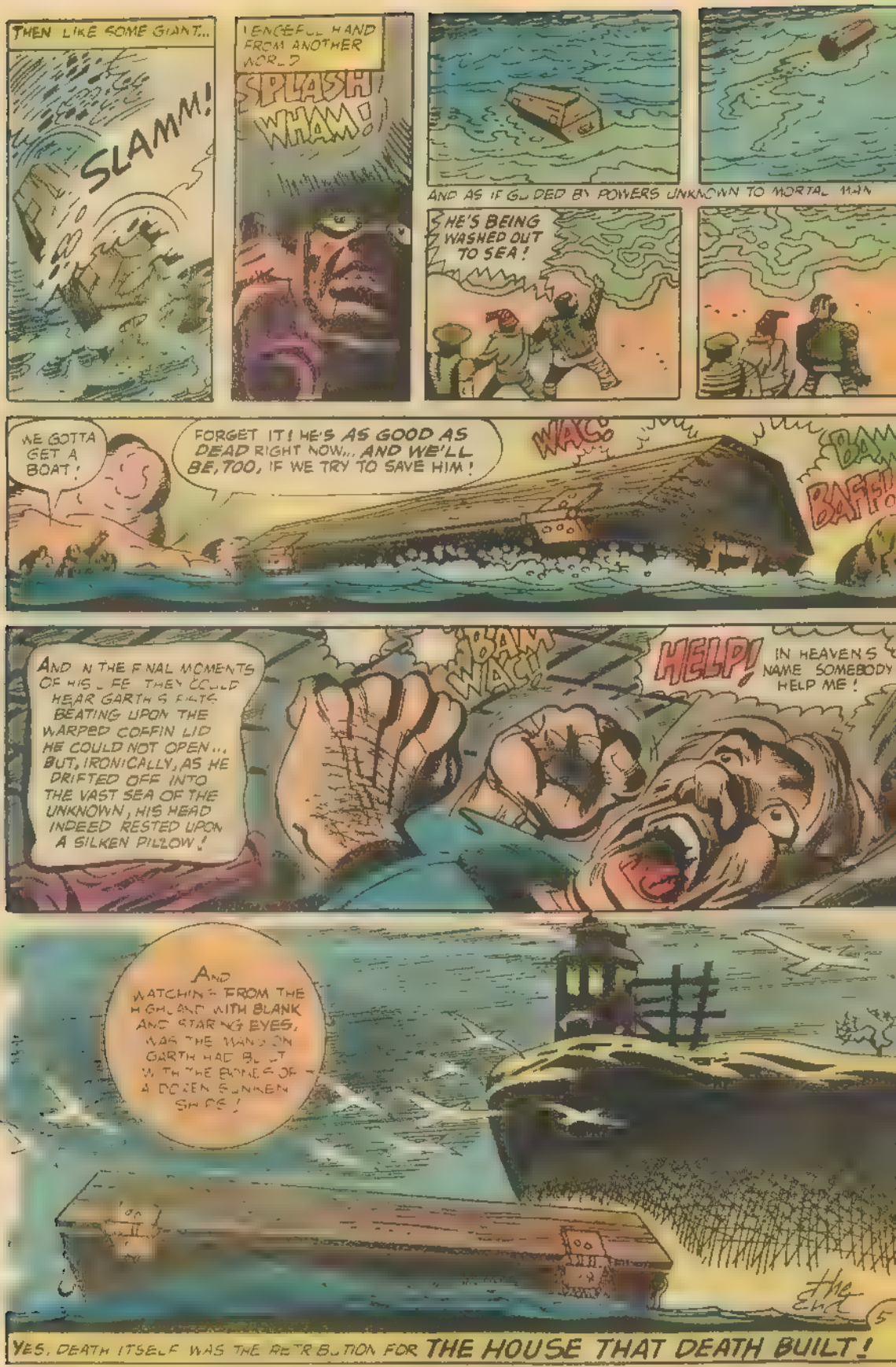
YES IT'S SEA WATER! THIS PLACE IS LEAKING LIKE A SHIP THAT IS ABOUT TO SINK. IT IS A BAD SIGN, GARTH!
BAH! STOW THAT SUPERSTITIOUS GABBLE AND KEEP WORKING!


IGNORING THE DARK PORTENTS GARTH PERSISTED AND AS THE YEARS PASSING SHIPS...
A RICH HALL AGAIN MASTER GARTH! THAT STERN GALLERY MUST HAVE COST A FORTUNE!
AYE! WE CAN USE THAT GILDED CARVING FOR MY MANSION WALLS!

AND YET, WITH EACH DAY, THERE WERE MORE OMINOUS WARNINGS...
GET OUT OF HERE! SHE'S TOSSING AND HEAVING...COMING APART AT THE SEAMS...LIKE A SINKING SHIP!
IT'S A SIGN! THERE IS SURE HELL SHE EVIL IN THESE WALLS!
RUN, EVERYBODY!
KKEERRRASSH!

I DON'T UNDERSTAND! I THOUGHT ITS WALLS WERE COMING DOWN! BUT HERE, OUTSIDE, SHE'S SOLID AS A ROCK!
I TELL YOU, GARTH ,,THERE S SOME SORCERY BREWING HERE!
WE SAW YOU FLEEING FROM THE HOUSE, GARTH! WHAT'S WRONG? YOUR EVIL CONSCIENCE BOTHERING YOU?
BUT DON'T WORRY! YOUR TROUBLE WILL BE FORGOTTEN, ONCE YOU REST YOUR HEAD ON THAT SILKEN PILLOW YOU ALWAYS BOASTED ABOUT!
LET THEM TAUNT ME! ONE MORE RICH WRECK, AND I'LL HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH TO GO INTO SOME MORE RESPECTABLE TRADE--
I'LL BE A MERCHANT ,,, A BANKER ,,, OR PERHAPS A SLAVE TRADER!
THEN ONE NIGHT CAME THE GLAD NEWS ...
OUR BEACON WORKED AGAIN, GARTH! THERE S A FINE, FAT SHIP BREAKING HER BACK ON THE REEF OFFSHORE!
AHA, THIS CALLS FOR A CELEBRATION!
WE'LL HAVE GOOD PICKINGS ON THE BEACH IN THE MORNING!
THAT NIGHT, GARTH WAS IN HIS DRUNKEN GLORY!
I'M RICH ,RICH ,RICH! THE RICHEST MAN ON THIS COAST!
HAHAHAHA!
IT WAS AT THAT MOMENT THAT GARTH STUMBLED ...
UHHH!
SOMETHING UNDERFOOT! SHOULD HAVE CARRIED A LANTERN! MUST BE A PIECE OF WRECKAGE!
CONTINUED ON 53rd PAGE FOLLOWING.

BUT AS HIS HEAD SANK ONTO A SOFT AND LUXURIOUS SURFACE,
A PILLOW, AYE! A SILKEN PILLOW FOR MY HEAD... WHAT I ALWAYS DREAMED OF!
AND NOW TO SLEEP. SLEEP, SLEEP
WITH THE FIRST LIGHT OF DAWN GARTH'S JACKALS WERE AT WORK...
A BIG CARGO -- YES! BUT GARTH WON'T LIKE THIS HAUL!
WE'D BETTER FIND HIM AND TELL HIM!
IT WAS FURTHER DOWN THE BEACH THAT THEY FOUND THEIR DRINK-SODDEN MASTER!
THERE HE IS FAST ASLEEP!
'TIS THE HAND OF FATE!
A RICH CARGO OF FINE COFFINS -- AND GARTH ASLEEP IN ONE OF THEM! 'TIS LIKE SOME GRISLY JOKE!
BUT AT THAT MOMENT, RISING FROM THE SEA LIKE A MIGHTY MOUNTAIN...
LOOK! THAT WAVE! I NEVER SAW ONE SO HUGE...
IT'S ROLLING IN LIKE AN AVALANCHE!
OUT OF HERE BEFORE IT SWAMPS US!
RROOOOOAAAAARR!


THEN LIKE SOME GIANT...
SLAMM!
RELENTLESS HAND FROM ANOTHER WORLD
SPLASH! WHAM!
AND AS IF GUIDED BY POWERS UNKNOWN TO MORTAL MAN
SHE'S BEING WASHED OUT TO SEA!
WE GOTTA GET A BOAT!
FORGET IT! HE'S AS GOOD AS DEAD RIGHT NOW... AND WE'LL BE, TOO, IF WE TRY TO SAVE HIM!
WAC
BAM
BAFF!
AND IN THE FINAL MOMENTS OF HIS LIFE THEY COULD HEAR GARTH'S FISTS BEATING UPON THE WARPED COFFIN LID HE COULD NOT OPEN... BUT, IRONICALLY, AS HE DRIFTED OFF INTO THE VAST SEA OF THE UNKNOWN, HIS HEAD INDEED RESTED UPON A SILKEN PILLOW!
BAM WAC!
HELP!
IN HEAVEN'S NAME SOMEBODY HELP ME!
AND WATCHING FROM THE HIGHLAND WITH BLANK AND STARING EYES, WAS THE MAN ON GARTH HAD BUILT WITH THE BONES OF A DOZEN SUNKEN SHIPS!
THE END
5
YES, DEATH ITSELF WAS THE RETRIBUTION FOR THE HOUSE THAT DEATH BUILT!

A SINISTER HOUSE SPECIAL

The HALF-LUCKY CHARM!
HE AGREED TO ACCEPT HALF THE LUCK THE CHARM WOULD BRING HIM -- WITHOUT REALIZING THAT HALF-LUCK COULD BE FAR MORE TERRIBLE THAN NO LUCK AT ALL !
EARLY ONE EVENING IN A LITTLE CURIO SHOP JUST OFF HERALD SQUARE...
HELLO! STILL OPEN FOR BUSINESS? I NEED A COSTUME FOR A MASQUERADE BALL TONIGHT!
I WANT SOMETHING WEIRD.. REAL SCARY!
YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT PLACE, SIR! MIGHT I SUGGEST A SORCERER'S COSTUME?
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A SINISTER HOUSE SPECIAL

AH! THAT IS THE JADE LUCK CHARM OF THE GREAT CAGLIOSTRO! YOU CAN HAVE IT FOR $100--A SMALL PRICE TO PAY, YOU MUST AGREE, FOR A LUCKY LIFE!
I ONLY HAVE $50 LEFT! GUESS I'LL HAVE TO WAIT TILL TOMORROW TO BUY IT!

$50, SIR? VERY WELL--TAKE THIS HALF! I WILL HOLD THE OTHER HALF FOR 12 HOURS! BUT IF YOU DO NOT CALL FOR IT IN THAT TIME--I CANNOT SELL IT TO YOU!
SNAP!

WHEW!! WHAT SOME PROPRIETORS WILL DO TO MAKE A SALE! TAKE HALF NOW, AND HALF TOMORROW! WONDER IF HALF THIS CHARM WILL WORK... AND BRING ME HALF AS MUCH LUCK AS I'D ORDINARILY HAVE? HA! HA!
CURIO SHOP

AS MARTIN DEVLIN OPENS HIS APARTMENT DOOR...
THE DOORMAN MUST HAVE SLIPPED THIS SPECIAL DELIVERY LETTER IN! IT'S FROM BARTON AND CRANE, MY ATTORNEYS...

GREAT SCOTT! MY UNCLE EBENEZER FINCH DIED--AND LEFT ME HALF HIS ESTATE AND HALF HIS FORTUNE! TO GET THE REST, I HAVE TO FULFILL CERTAIN OBLIGATIONS OF HIS WILL..!

CONTINUED ON 5TH PAGE FOLLOWING

A SINISTER HOUSE SPECIAL

AS MARTIN DEVLIN DRESSES FOR THE COSTUME BALL...
HALF AN ESTATE! HALF A FORTUNE! HMM... I WONDER IF THERE CAN BE ANYTHING IN THIS "HALF-LUCK" BUSINESS? IT SEEMS TO BE WORKING OUT THAT WAY!
I'M HALF-MAN AND HALF-ANIMAL IN THIS PAN COSTUME!
LATER, AT THE MASQUERADE BALL...
THAT GIRL... DRESSED IN AN EVENING GOWN HALF-WHITE AND HALF-BLACK! GOT TO ASK HER TO DANCE... MAKE FRIENDS WITH HER!
HELLO! WHY--WHAT'S WRONG? DON'T YOU LIKE MY HALF-MASK? IT'S SOMETHING I THOUGHT UP BY MYSELF!
IT--ER...STARTLED ME! BUT NEVER MIND THAT! LET'S DANCE!
I WANT TO KNOW YOU BETTER, DIANE! PLEASE TELL ME THE OTHER HALF OF YOUR NAME!
NOT NOW! WHEN YOU COME TO SEE ME! MY ADDRESS IS 1121...
1121... WHAT? I ONLY HEARD HALF YOUR ADDRESS...

A SINISTER HOUSE SPECIAL

NEXT MORNING, AT A TELLER'S CAGE OF THE LOCAL BANK...
HERE'S YOUR $50 WITH-DRAWAL, MR. DEVLIN!
NOW I CAN BUY THE REST OF THAT GOOD LUCK CHARM!
WHEN I GET THE REST OF MY TALISMAN, MY LUCK WILL BE COMPLETE! THE BALANCE OF MY UNCLE'S HOUSE AND FORTUNE! DIANE'S FULL NAME AND ADDRESS!
IN THE CURIO SHOP, DEVLIN THRUSTS THE MONEY INTO THE PROPRIETOR'S HAND...
I'M SORRY, SIR! YOU ONLY BROUGHT ME $25--HALF OF THE $50 DUE! I CAN'T GIVE YOU THE CHARM!
THE BANK TELLER MUST HAVE SHORT-CHANGED ME!
I'VE SOLD EVERYTHING HERE TO A MAN FOR HIS PRIVATE COLLECTION! HE WON'T SELL TO ANYONE! THAT'S WHY I GAVE YOU THAT TIME LIMIT! HIS TITLE TAKES EFFECT AS OF THIS MOMENT!
BUT YOU CAN'T LEAVE ME TO THIS FATE!
TO GET YOUR GOOD LUCK IN HALVES IS WORSE THAN GETTING NOTHING AT ALL! IT'S TANTALIZING--LIKE WATER TO A THIRSTY MAN, JUST OUT OF HIS REACH! IT'S MADDENING! I CAN'T STAND IT! SHALL I THROW AWAY THIS HALF-CHARM...OR KEEP IT?
I KNOW! I'LL FLIP IT! HEADS, I KEEP IT... TAILS, I THROW IT AWAY...
IT FELL HALF-WAY BETWEEN HEADS AND TAILS! I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT!
The END

HOME, SWEET HOMICIDE

Harold Locke drove a van for a small trucking company as far north as Haverhill and as far south as Fairhaven on the eastern spine of Massachusetts. His cargo consisted of the usual merchandise, but the night he experienced a strange and frightening dream, his entire future was to change.

Was it the midnight snack he had had with his fiancée Joan Witherspoon that had unsettled his stomach and brought on the nightmare? Was it his boss, Sam Lieber, who only hours before had confided that an important if not valuable shipment was due to arrive, to be transported to Ipswich, and that Harold was the likely candidate for the chore?

Harold remembered having finally fallen asleep after some difficulty . . . and now he was awake, very wide awake, trembling as if his body were chilled, the sweat beading his brow and moistening his pajamas. How could he shake the terrible, torturous dream from his fragmented mind?

He was driving his small truck, the moonlight slitting through the trees, the salty tang of Massachusetts Bay spicing the air, making idle chatter with the heavyset stranger seated alongside when suddenly, he felt a thick metal object stab his ribs. He had to force himself to glance downward . . . at the snub-nosed, murderous .32 even while his companion growled, "Thanks for making it so easy. All I gotta do is plug you and take off with the cash, and nobody'll ever be the wiser!"

Harold didn't recognize his own voice, it was so choked and hoarse, and suddenly his pitiful plea was punctuated by a deafening blast, a burst of orange-red. He felt the bullet bore into his body, smelled burning flesh, felt the stabbing pain fan out in rivulets, and suddenly he was numb, numb like the dead as he pitched forward against the steering wheel.

It was, he admitted to himself next morning, an inane dream, yet he told Sam Lieber, who accused him of trying to goof off, "Listen, you're getting married, you can use a little extra dough, right?" said Lieber. "Well, you deliver this parcel, and there's a bonus in it for you. Nothing's gonna happen, you take my word, boy!"

But Joan reacted differently. "It's a premonition. I don't believe in it as much as you or Sam Lieber, but why take a chance? We'll get along with whatever we've saved so far."

"Okay, honey, relax. I'll tell Mr. Lieber he can drive the van himself, if it's so important to him," he said, reassuringly. "See you tonight at 8, as usual."

The rest of the day, Harold had mixed feelings. Would he, a grown man on the threshold of marriage, concede to such a silly warning? And thinking of marriage, wouldn't the bonus, no matter what the amount, be worth it?

"Attaboy, go prove it to yourself! There ain't no such things like omens," said Lieber heartedly when Harold agreed to drive the load. Then, pointing to a valise, he added, "There it is, boy, packed with negotiable bonds—$50,000 worth, which means finder's keepers. You deliver to our client, and there's $100 extra waiting

Saugus . . . Stoneham . . . Wakefield rolled past him as he drove along Route 95. Approaching Danvers, Harold stopped for coffee. He knew the diner's proprietor well. When he hinted at the value of his cargo, the owner gladly offered to accompany him since he was shutting the diner for the night, anyway.

Harold felt safe. His companion was a muscular, six-foot stalwart. The truck plowed into the velvety night. Now and then, very infrequently because of the late hour, a pair of headlights would swim towards them in the opposite lane, then dash by to be swallowed in the darkness.

With a jolt, Harold realized that he had forgotten to call Joan. And it was at that precise instant that his dream of the night before sprang into stark, frightening reality.

The pistol was jammed into his ribs; the guttural voice was rasping: "Pull over to the side, Harold! This is as far as you go! And you're never gonna go a step further because corpses can't walk!"

He couldn't believe for a moment that it wasn't a recurrence of the nightmare, but the beady eyes staring into his and the pain in his side were all too genuine.

"Look! Why don't you take the valise and just leave me?" he managed to stammer.

"And have you spill to the cops? Forget it! Nobody saw me and you leave. You were my last customer!"

Harold hated himself for having told Sam Lieber, who virtually had dared him to make the trip, hated himself for having confided in this owner! Right now, he would be having a hamburger and coke with Joan . . .

Joan? Was this a figment of his whirling brain, or was it actually she? He was slowing the vehicle, nudging it onto the shoulder and Joan was leaping from the rear seat of a sedan, along with an armed state trooper, who was hurtling out of the front seat, while his partner at the wheel triggered the siren.

Joan was in Harold's arms, crying softly, while the troopers seized the would-be killer-thief's gun and snapped the cuffs on him.

"How did you know?" Harold said to her. "Where did you think of looking for me?

"Sam Lieber and woman's intuition," she said. "When you didn't show up for our date, I phoned Sam, who told me about your trip. And recalling how upset you were about your dream, I called the police, who offered to follow your route . . . with me along, of course."

"That truck of mine! I think about it so much, it's more like a home—a SINISTER HOUSE! But this time, I came out smiling . . . and now you, too, honey, can believe in dreams."